



DESIGNHEURE

LIGHTING

ÉDITION — FRANCE

DESIGNHEURE'S GENERAL MANAGER, BÉNÉDICTE COLLOD, GIVES US EXPERT INSIGHT ON HOW LIGHTING CAN TRANSFORM THE ATMOSPHERE OF A HOTEL

On the eve of the opening of BDNY, an event bringing together hotel and restaurant industry professionals to discuss layout, design, and sustainable development, we are exploring a topic that has the potential to transform the ambiance in a hotel... the lighting of reception areas often referred to the lobby.

In this interview, Designheure's general manager Bénédicte Collod talks about how she made her sculptural lights, 100% made in France, the best allies for the wow factor everyone is looking to achieve.



Lighting: Cargo collection by DESIGNHEURE - Hotel Ekta, Paris - ©Christophe Bielsa



Lighting: Fleur de Kaolin chandelier by DESIGNHEURE - Hilton Alpharetta - ©AJJN Photography

Why do you think hotel lobbies focus all their attention on the design?

The lobby is meant to be a memorable, dramatic and welcoming space that announces the style of the hotel as it is where guests make their first impression. Therefore, lighting should focus on the details that highlight the design statement or architecture and set the tone for the rest of the hotel. It is the first visible element that differentiates them from the competition.

The reception area is often integrated into the lobby and designed as a space to rest, work on the move, chat, relax, read the newspaper, browse on your phone, and have a drink with the attention of the reception and concierge service.

Hotels are putting a lot of emphasis on the lobby, making it a warm and inviting place to meet, linger and mingle. In recent years, they've been betting that livelier lobbies will provide a competitive advantage. By drawing guests out of their rooms, hotels hope to attract more food and beverage sales. The lobby is turning into a space that guests can utilize for business meetings.

How does light play a major role in a visitor's experience of a hotel lobby?

U.S. researchers have found that the design of a hotel influences the way guests will remember it. A series of mood scales were designed to evaluate the elements of a hotel lobby from the customer's perspective, highlighting that the lighting, textures, furnishings, and environmental relevance were significant to the overall impression of the hotel lobby. This environment is determined by the light, both functional and decorative, respecting the functions of the space and conceived as a whole in a harmonious way.

Is lighting in a lobby designed for the decor only or does it also serve some functional purpose?

The key to a pleasant atmosphere in hotel lobbies comes from the interaction between natural light, indirect functional (or architectural) light, and direct decorative light. As soon as guests enter the hotel, they feel comfortable thanks to the light, which draws their attention to specific areas of the lobby and makes it easier for them to find their way around. The answer is twofold: we play on the aesthetics and use the light as signage. Lighting designers agree: the hotel lobby raises some challenges for many reasons. First and foremost is the fact that most of the lobby's functions and passageways are different at different times of the day.



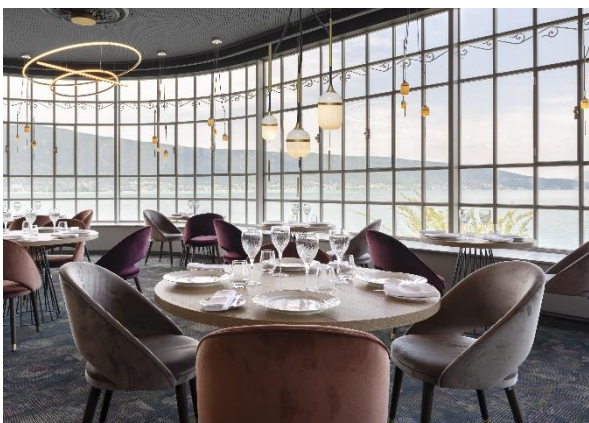
Lighting: Cargo collection by DESIGNHEURE - Evergreen Laurel Hotel - ©Agathe Tissier

All lobbies are multipurpose: There is usually a lot of activity (conferences, meeting rooms, incoming arrivals). There are many different types of visitors, so the lobby needs to convey all the visual cues for a customer to find relevant information and navigate their way around. The lighting in the lobby should create a visual environment that guides people.

There are now **mixed lounge areas** where you can work and drink with friends and family. The furniture and the type of lighting will create that type of atmosphere. Office lamps can be used here, and some decorative lighting will bring flow to the space (e.g. MOBULA pendant lamps from Designheure).

Workstations in a hotel respond to new needs as well. Hotels have also seen it as a way to make the most of spaces not used to their full potential. The investments are not that substantial, and often, hotels are already equipped with wifi, chairs, tables, etc. Staff is also already present to supervise this service. Hoteliers are optimizing their square footage. In some hotels, the lobby is also a versatile workstation. In others, the breakfast room is transformed into a work area as soon as service and cleaning are completed. The word "day-use" takes on its full meaning: by engaging in coworking spaces, hoteliers make the most of spaces that are not used at certain times of the day.

It is also a way for hoteliers to **get the word out about their establishments**. The hoteliers diversify their customer targets and benefit from the communication generated by this new service. It also appeals to new customers for the **other services like the bar or the restaurant**. It's an easy way to create life, to animate spaces that would otherwise remain sadly empty. Who wants to go and have a drink in an empty bar?



Lighting: Fleur de Kaolin by DESIGNHEURE - Le Palace de Menthon - ©Florian Peallat



Lighting: Nénuphar collection by DESIGNHEURE - Hilton Minneapolis - ©Arturo Barbera

How to play between natural and artificial light?

In addition to the nature of functional or decorative lighting, the variable intensity of the lighting allows you to highlight a particular space (towards the restaurant), play with the natural light, or vary its intensity in the evening.

As a result, lighting fixtures with programmed dimmers are necessary for a hotel lobby, using daylight coming in, but automatically adjusting in the evening, according to the choices of designers and architects.

- The lobby should be warm, welcoming, and comforting. The light should emphasize the architecture and give an impression of coziness and security.
- The check-in area should have higher light intensities to draw customers inwards.
- The desk area should be brightly lit, so that staff members appear accessible.

How to create a "dramatic" effect to set the scene in the lobby with light?

Lots of hotel lobbies feature high ceilings. Massive lighting that can adapt and adjust perfectly to the space is essential. The chandelier or lighting installation must be designed as an architectural project with a scenography of its own. Suppose the lobby is organized as a patio around which the floors are presented. In that case, it is recommended to create lighting levels visible from the bottom of the lobby and from the different floors around which small intermediate lounges can be organized. The lobby becomes a place around which people gather.

Lobbies are often equipped with an exceptional chandelier visible from the entrance and sometimes from the street, which will help position the hotel as a whole. While the room designs can differ, the lobby sets the tone and style that must be carried into the rooms. In addition to pleasing the client, it is also important to maintain a consistent aesthetic, quality, and style throughout the hotel.



Lighting: Nuage chandelier by DESIGNHEURE - Dreadriver, Birmingham AL - ©Chris Luker